

**County of San Diego  
Valle De Oro Community Planning Group  
P.O. Box 936  
La Mesa, CA 91944-0936**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES: May 17, 2011**

**LOCATION:** Otay Water District Headquarters  
Training Room, Lower Terrace  
2554 Sweetwater Springs Blvd.  
Spring Valley, California 91978-2004

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** 7:02 PM Jack L. Phillips, Presiding Chair

Members present: Brownlee, Feathers, Fitchett, Henderson, Hyatt, Manning, Mitrovich, Myers, Phillips, Reith, Wollitz

Absent: Brennan, Forthun, Millar, Ripperger

**2. FINALIZE AGENDA:** As shown

**3. OPEN FORUM:** None

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** April 19, 2011 **VOTE: 8 -0-3 to approve.**

Abstained: Feathers, Henderson, Wollitz

**5. LAND USE**

- a. ZAP06-007W1: Expansion of AT&T cell site at 3607 Avocado Blvd. (near Dixieline): replace 12 existing with larger antennas; add 6 TMAs, 12 RMUs, 2 surge suppressors, & 2 new equipment cabinets.

The project was presented by FITCHETT who stated that it is a modification of an existing Minor Use Permit for the expansion of an existing AT&T cell site. The site is located adjacent to the parking lot at Dixieline behind the AAA building. Alia Sumpter, representing AT&T, described the modifications of the existing faux tree antenna tower. They propose to remove the existing 6'7" antennas and replace them with new 8'3" antennas. 2 new equipment cabinets would be placed within the existing 8' high CMU enclosure.

FITCHETT referred to a photo of the proposed faux-tree. He noted that the additional antennas make the tree appear denser. He recommended that they increase the height to add a realistic crown to the tree to compensate. He also wants the branches to extend at least 2' from the antennas to help camouflage them. He asked to have the team investigate adding 5' to the tree so there would be 2 layers and thereby offset the 6 additional antennas by 4' so that they have a less dense appearance. The Applicant stated that they haven't run a structural analysis to see if tree would hold the additional weight. PHILLIPS states that they need more branch coverage than shown. He encouraged the cell towers here because it is a highly

populated area with a straight shot down Route 94 in both directions. Applicant states that each unit is custom built. Typically when a faux tree is constructed they have limitations including those at the top end and additional branching. The existing antenna array has empty mount locations so that the additional antennas will not push out further. PHILLIPS said we are making an effort to accommodate their extra antennas but they may need to do further engineering to accommodate our requests. FITCHETT **moves** to recommend the approval of the modification of the Minor Use Permit with the following conditions:

- Extend the crown of the faux tree an additional 5' in height (total height will be 55') in order to provide a more natural appearance.
- Extend the branches of the faux tree 2' beyond the face of the panel antennas to break up their rectangular lines and to soften the appearance.
- Camouflage the RRUs and the Surge Suppressors.

(Reith seconds.) **VOTE 11-0-0 to approve**

- b. 25' high, two-sided 10' x 20' pole sign; requested to be oriented toward the S.R.94 freeway at the west end of the Astiz Tennis Ranch at 9545 Campo Road.

The project was presented by FEATHERS. She circulated photos of the facility where a pole with flagging on top indicated the proposed height and approximate location of the proposed sign. She also circulated depictions of the proposed signs from the Applicant. She discussed the Valle De Oro Community Plan, Section 8. Scenic Highways. The GOAL is to utilize scenic highway corridors as one method of protecting and enhancing the appearance of scenic, historical, and recreational areas. Policies and Recommendations 1. Support the priority of the scenic highway corridors in Valle De Oro as designated in the County's General Plan. 2. Support priorities of the scenic highway corridors in Valle De Oro as follows: Route 94 first priority.

Carol Brady, representing Sign.org, explained that originally they proposed a 300 SF 35' high freeway oriented sign that would be appealing for on-site service only. They downsized the sign to 25' high and 200 SF sign. It would be V shaped with signs on both sides, as shown on her handout, which included an advertisement for a restaurant. HENDERSON says the facility has a clubhouse with a kitchen facility but no restaurant. She stated that by County code in the C42 zone on this property they are allowed a 25' high pylon sign of 200 SF. They want it externally illuminated. They do have tennis courts and a pool, per the sign advertisement. They would like us to look at the size and placement of the sign.

FEATHERS **moves** to consider a smaller (5 x 10') non-lighted, single-faced sign, 10' lower (max height of 15'). (Henderson seconds). FITCHETT asks why are we violating our Community Plan rules? MITROVICH asked how we can prevent them from changing the message of the sign in the future when it is unenforceable. HENDERSON uses the facility but the people next door to the facility throw things at them. She believes they need something to "lift up" the area and there are already signs along the way, anyway. She believes they need more business. Any size sign would help. However, she, too, has concerns about setting precedents for future signs. BROWNEE recommends making it look like a sign for the business versus looking like a billboard advertisement, perhaps a sign with just the name of the facility. **VOTE 3-8-0 to approve fails. Henderson, Hyatt, and Phillips voted to approve.** MITROVICH then **moved** to deny the sign on grounds of scenic corridor status of

SR 94 and the fact that the proposal would interfere with scenic views. (Fitchett seconds.)  
**VOTE 9-2-0 to deny sign. (Henderson and Phillips voted against motion)**

## **6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a. Applicant request to reconsider VDOCPG vote (12-0) of 11-6-07 to oppose an El Cajon annexation request for Parcel #493-111-14 located adjacent to Rocky Hills Road and Washington Heights Place. Related City of El Cajon applications are ZR2293, PRD65R, and TSM645R dated 10-4-07 and 2-18-09. The issue for this meeting is whether the changes of the 2-18-09 version warrant reconsideration of the project. If the Group votes to reconsider the project, it will be placed on the next Planning Group meeting agenda.

The applicant, Mr. Thomas, was not present, so the request was presented by PHILLIPS. He stated that he spoke to Mr. Thomas and told him to come to the meeting, present his case, and see if the group would vote to reconsider their previous vote to oppose the project. The tentative map that the VDOCPG reviewed on 11-6-07 and the latest tentative map were displayed on the wall. A letter from the applicant dated May 15, 2011 and the appropriate minutes of the 11-6-07 meeting were distributed to Group members and the public. The Planning Group examined all of the documents. The floor was then opened to discussion

Ron Owen of 840 Overlook Lane spoke and showed a letter from him and his neighbors saying that there weren't enough changes to warrant reconsidering the project. He said Mr. Thomas sent e-mails to neighbors stating if they don't support the project they would be denied access. Their current access has been a paved road which he threatens to block if they don't support the project. The challenge they would have is that emergency vehicles would have trouble accessing their homes due to huge boulders that would block their access. One gentleman present has lived there for 50 years and used the existing access for 50 years. Mr. Thomas threatens to put up "No Trespassing" signs and use guards to block their access.

PHILLIPS pointed out differences between the 10-4-07 version and the 2-18-09 version of the tentative map. Is there enough difference between plans considering major issues of density, type of unit, loss of visual resources, etc.? PHILLIPS asks if any group members support reconsideration of our 11-6-07 vote to oppose this project. There was no support to reconsider this project.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Discussion of State requirements for ethics training (AB 1234). PHILLIPS referred to a letter he received concerning the necessity of 2 hours of ethics training. Phillips & Fitchett will take it.

## **8. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Reports, Announcements, Expenses, Appeals**

Invitation to fire training facility ground breaking on Wednesday, June 8<sup>th</sup> from 9:45 – 11 AM.  
Otay Water District's 2010 urban water management plan is on their website  
[www.otaywater.gov](http://www.otaywater.gov)

The Hillsdale segment between Chase and Vista Grande radar enforcement has been recertified as well as a segment of Rolling Hills Drive.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT 8:45 PM**

Submitted by: Jösan Feathers

**County of San Diego  
Valle De Oro Community Planning Group  
P.O. Box 936  
La Mesa, CA 91944-0936**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES: May 17, 2011**

**LOCATION:** Otay Water District Headquarters  
Training Room, Lower Terrace  
2554 Sweetwater Springs Blvd.  
Spring Valley, California 91978-2004

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** 7:02 PM Jack L. Phillips, Presiding Chair

Members present: Brownlee, Feathers, Fitchett, Henderson, Hyatt, Manning, Mitrovich, Myers, Phillips, Reith, Wollitz

Absent: Brennan, Forthun, Millar, Ripperger

**2. FINALIZE AGENDA:** As shown

**3. OPEN FORUM:** None

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** April 19, 2011 **VOTE: 8 -0-3 to approve.**

Abstained: Feathers, Henderson, Wollitz

**5. LAND USE**

- a. ZAP06-007W1: Expansion of AT&T cell site at 3607 Avocado Blvd. (near Dixieline): replace 12 existing with larger antennas; add 6 TMAs, 12 RMUs, 2 surge suppressors, & 2 new equipment cabinets.

The project was presented by FITCHETT who stated that it is a modification of an existing Minor Use Permit for the expansion of an existing AT&T cell site. The site is located adjacent to the parking lot at Dixieline behind the AAA building. Alia Sumpter, representing AT&T, described the modifications of the existing faux tree antenna tower. They propose to remove the existing 6'7" antennas and replace them with new 8'3" antennas. 2 new equipment cabinets would be placed within the existing 8' high CMU enclosure.

FITCHETT referred to a photo of the proposed faux-tree. He noted that the additional antennas make the tree appear denser. He recommended that they increase the height to add a realistic crown to the tree to compensate. He also wants the branches to extend at least 2' from the antennas to help camouflage them. He asked to have the team investigate adding 5' to the tree so there would be 2 layers and thereby offset the 6 additional antennas by 4' so that they have a less dense appearance. The Applicant stated that they haven't run a structural analysis to see if tree would hold the additional weight. PHILLIPS states that they need more branch coverage than shown. He encouraged the cell towers here because it is a highly

populated area with a straight shot down Route 94 in both directions. Applicant states that each unit is custom built. Typically when a faux tree is constructed they have limitations including those at the top end and additional branching. The existing antenna array has empty mount locations so that the additional antennas will not push out further. PHILLIPS said we are making an effort to accommodate their extra antennas but they may need to do further engineering to accommodate our requests. FITCHETT **moves** to recommend the approval of the modification of the Minor Use Permit with the following conditions:

- Extend the crown of the faux tree an additional 5' in height (total height will be 55') in order to provide a more natural appearance.
- Extend the branches of the faux tree 2' beyond the face of the panel antennas to break up their rectangular lines and to soften the appearance.
- Camouflage the RRUs and the Surge Suppressors.

(Reith seconds.) **VOTE 11-0-0 to approve**

- b. 25' high, two-sided 10' x 20' pole sign; requested to be oriented toward the S.R.94 freeway at the west end of the Astiz Tennis Ranch at 9545 Campo Road.

The project was presented by FEATHERS. She circulated photos of the facility where a pole with flagging on top indicated the proposed height and approximate location of the proposed sign. She also circulated depictions of the proposed signs from the Applicant. She discussed the Valle De Oro Community Plan, Section 8. Scenic Highways. The GOAL is to utilize scenic highway corridors as one method of protecting and enhancing the appearance of scenic, historical, and recreational areas. Policies and Recommendations 1. Support the priority of the scenic highway corridors in Valle De Oro as designated in the County's General Plan. 2. Support priorities of the scenic highway corridors in Valle De Oro as follows: Route 94 first priority.

Carol Brady, representing Sign.org, explained that originally they proposed a 300 SF 35' high freeway oriented sign that would be appealing for on-site service only. They downsized the sign to 25' high and 200 SF sign. It would be V shaped with signs on both sides, as shown on her handout, which included an advertisement for a restaurant. HENDERSON says the facility has a clubhouse with a kitchen facility but no restaurant. She stated that by County code in the C42 zone on this property they are allowed a 25' high pylon sign of 200 SF. They want it externally illuminated. They do have tennis courts and a pool, per the sign advertisement. They would like us to look at the size and placement of the sign.

FEATHERS **moves** to consider a smaller (5 x 10') non-lighted, single-faced sign, 10' lower (max height of 15'). (Henderson seconds). FITCHETT asks why are we violating our Community Plan rules? MITROVICH asked how we can prevent them from changing the message of the sign in the future when it is unenforceable. HENDERSON uses the facility but the people next door to the facility throw things at them. She believes they need something to "lift up" the area and there are already signs along the way, anyway. She believes they need more business. Any size sign would help. However, she, too, has concerns about setting precedents for future signs. BROWNEE recommends making it look like a sign for the business versus looking like a billboard advertisement, perhaps a sign with just the name of the facility. **VOTE 3-8-0 to approve fails. Henderson, Hyatt, and Phillips voted to approve.** MITROVICH then **moved** to deny the sign on grounds of scenic corridor status of

SR 94 and the fact that the proposal would interfere with scenic views. (Fitchett seconds.)  
**VOTE 9-2-0 to deny sign. (Henderson and Phillips voted against motion)**

## **6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a. Applicant request to reconsider VDOCPG vote (12-0) of 11-6-07 to oppose an El Cajon annexation request for Parcel #493-111-14 located adjacent to Rocky Hills Road and Washington Heights Place. Related City of El Cajon applications are ZR2293, PRD65R, and TSM645R dated 10-4-07 and 2-18-09. The issue for this meeting is whether the changes of the 2-18-09 version warrant reconsideration of the project. If the Group votes to reconsider the project, it will be placed on the next Planning Group meeting agenda.

The applicant, Mr. Thomas, was not present, so the request was presented by PHILLIPS. He stated that he spoke to Mr. Thomas and told him to come to the meeting, present his case, and see if the group would vote to reconsider their previous vote to oppose the project. The tentative map that the VDOCPG reviewed on 11-6-07 and the latest tentative map were displayed on the wall. A letter from the applicant dated May 15, 2011 and the appropriate minutes of the 11-6-07 meeting were distributed to Group members and the public. The Planning Group examined all of the documents. The floor was then opened to discussion

Ron Owen of 840 Overlook Lane spoke and showed a letter from him and his neighbors saying that there weren't enough changes to warrant reconsidering the project. He said Mr. Thomas sent e-mails to neighbors stating if they don't support the project they would be denied access. Their current access has been a paved road which he threatens to block if they don't support the project. The challenge they would have is that emergency vehicles would have trouble accessing their homes due to huge boulders that would block their access. One gentleman present has lived there for 50 years and used the existing access for 50 years. Mr. Thomas threatens to put up "No Trespassing" signs and use guards to block their access.

PHILLIPS pointed out differences between the 10-4-07 version and the 2-18-09 version of the tentative map. Is there enough difference between plans considering major issues of density, type of unit, loss of visual resources, etc.? PHILLIPS asks if any group members support reconsideration of our 11-6-07 vote to oppose this project. There was no support to reconsider this project.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Discussion of State requirements for ethics training (AB 1234). PHILLIPS referred to a letter he received concerning the necessity of 2 hours of ethics training. Phillips & Fitchett will take it.

## **8. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Reports, Announcements, Expenses, Appeals**

Invitation to fire training facility ground breaking on Wednesday, June 8<sup>th</sup> from 9:45 – 11 AM.  
Otay Water District's 2010 urban water management plan is on their website  
[www.otaywater.gov](http://www.otaywater.gov)

The Hillsdale segment between Chase and Vista Grande radar enforcement has been recertified as well as a segment of Rolling Hills Drive.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT 8:45 PM**

Submitted by: Jösan Feathers